



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Fourth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group

Guayaquil, Ecuador, 22 – 24 August 2011

ACAP Observer Report to the

81st Meeting IATTC

**Antigua, Guatemala, 27 September – 1 October 2010
&**

82nd Meeting IATTC

La Jolla, California, 4 - 8 July 2011

**Marco Favero
(ACAP Advisory Committee)**

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ACAP Observer Report – 81st Meeting IATTC

Marco Favero – ACAP Advisory Committee

Meeting Title

81st Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

Location & Date

Antigua, Guatemala, 27 September – 1 October 2010.

Website

<http://iattc.org/Meetings2010/PDF/Sept/Minutes/IATTC-81-Sep-2010-Minutes.pdf> (81st Commission Meeting report).

<http://iattc.org/Meetings2010/PDF/Aug/SAC-01-Meeting-report.pdf> (1st Meeting of the IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee).

Observer Name and Affiliation

Marco Favero, ACAP Advisory Committee.

Capacity of Attendance

Observer.

Relevant Paper Tabled/Proposed

Advice document prepared by the Agreement for Parties and other stakeholders attending the meeting (available in the ACAP Secretariat).

List of Documents relevant to ACAP

- Doc IATTC-81 Inf-A. Draft Resolution to mitigate the impact on seabirds of fishing for species covered by the Commission tabled by the IATTC secretariat (<http://www.iattc.org/Meetings2010/PDF/Sept/IATTC-81-INF-A-Seabird-conservation.pdf>).
- Doc IATTC-81-PROP-A-1. Submitted by Japan. Proposal tabled during the meeting and available in the ACAP Secretariat.
- Doc IATTC-81-PROP-A-2. Submitted by the European Union. Proposal tabled during the meeting and available in the ACAP Secretariat.
- Doc IATTC-81-10a Rev. Memorandum of Cooperation between observer programmes of IATTC and WCPFC (<http://www.iattc.org/Meetings2010/PDF/Sept/IATTC-81-10a-Cooperation-WCPFC-observer-program-REV.pdf>).
- Doc IATTC-81-PROP-B-3. Submitted by the European Union and Japan on scientific observers for longline vessels. Appendix 3a in Minutes of the 81st IATTC Commission Meeting (<http://iattc.org/Meetings2010/PDF/Sept/Minutes/IATTC-81-Sep-2010-Minutes.pdf>)

Outcomes

Between 31 August and 3 September 2010 the First Meeting of the IATTC **Scientific Advisory Committee** was held in La Jolla, California. The meeting had an informal format due to lack of *quorum*. Bycatch matters and specifically seabird bycatch was briefly addressed within a section on ecosystem considerations. Latest progress on mitigation methods and the need of further cooperation between IATTC and ACAP was highlighted. The draft conservation measure tabled in 2009 but not adopted was mentioned by the Secretariat expressing its willingness of submitting the measure later in the year during the Commission Meeting.

During the 81st Meeting of the IATTC Commission, the **seabird conservation measure** *Resolution to mitigate the impact on seabirds of fishing for species covered by the Commission* was tabled by the IATTC Secretariat (Doc IATTC-81 Inf-A, a text that emerged from the draft proposed at the 80th Meeting in June 2009 [Proposal C1-G]). The proposal was discussed in the margins of the meeting, with the participation of delegates from the EU, Spain, France, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico and Japan, among others. ACAP and BirdLife International were consulted by different Members as expert observers. The original document was re-drafted and two new proposals were separately submitted by Japan (IATTC-81-PROP-A-1) and the EU (IATTC-81-PROP-A-2). There was an intense work in collaboration with Delegates of the EU in order to refine the measure originally proposed. Both texts drafted by Japan and the EU considered the two-column approach but differed substantially in the mitigation methods considered. The one drafted by Japan was in line with the CM adopted by the WCPFC in 2007 (and considered side-setting with bird curtains and weighted branch lines, tori line, night setting with minimum deck lighting, weighted branch lines, blue-dyed bait, deep-setting line shooter, underwater setting chute, and management of offal discharge as mitigation options). The CM proposed by the EU was in line with the advice document provided by ACAP and considered night setting with minimum deck lighting, weighted branch lines, bird-scaring (tori) lines, and blue-dyed squid bait as the only mitigation options. Proposals also differed in other aspects such as technical specifications and area of application. After deliberations that took place very late in the week and with no room for negotiations, the EU declined the proposed draft and the one submitted by Japan was the only considered.

Although there was consensus for the adoption of a seabird conservation measure, political difficulties (described in section 4.a, minutes of the 81st Commission Meeting) only allowed the adoption of the measure as a (non binding) recommendation to begin on 1 September 2011 for longline vessels larger than 24m in length overall, and 1 September 2012 for longline vessels of less than 24 meters. In the later case, it was agreed that the technical specifications for measures most suitable for use by small vessels would be considered by the Commission's working group on bycatch, the SAC, and the IATTC scientific staff. The proposal excluded from the application area the jurisdictional waters of Mexico since delegates argued that had evidence of no interaction between their domestic fleet and seabirds.

There was not sufficient time available during the meeting for the consideration of proposals on scientific observers for longline vessels (Doc IATTC-81-PROP-B-3) and the cooperation between observer programmes of IATTC and WCPFC (Doc IATTC-81-10a Rev).

ACAP Observer Report – 82nd Meeting IATTC

Marco Favero – ACAP Advisory Committee

Meeting Title

82nd Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

Location & date

La Jolla, California, 4 - 8 July 2011

Website

<http://iattc.org/Meetings2011/Jun/IATTC-82nd-Meeting-June2011ENG.htm> (81st Commission Meeting report)

Observer Name and Affiliation

Marco Favero, ACAP Advisory Committee

Capacity of Attendance

Observer

Relevant Paper Tabled/Proposed

Advice document prepared by the Agreement for Parties and other stakeholders attending the meeting (available in the ACAP Secretariat)

List of Documents relevant to ACAP

- Doc IATTC-82-05c. Conservation Recommendations, submitted by the Secretariat. Includes Recommendation C-10-02 on mitigation of seabird bycatch in longline vessels voluntarily adopted in 2010 (Appendix 2) for the consideration of the Commission to be adopted as a binding Conservation Measure (<http://iattc.org/Meetings2011/Jun/PDFfiles/IATTC-82-05c-Conservation-recommendations.pdf>).
- Proposal IATTC-82-F-1. Submitted by the European Union and Japan. Draft resolution on scientific observers for longline vessels (<http://iattc.org/Meetings2011/Jun/PDFfiles/Proposals/IATTC-82-F-1-PROP-EUR-JPN-Observers-on-longline-vessels.pdf>).

Outcomes

Difficulties referred in the report of the 81st Commission Meeting and that precluded the adoption of a seabird CM were addressed by the IATTC Secretariat during the intersessional period. Hence, there was no inconvenient for the formal adoption of measures adopted as non binding recommendation in 2010 (seabird measure included). The Secretariat and a number of Commission Members were inclined for the adoption of the **seabird measure (C-10-02)** as it was tabled in 2010 in order to avoid opening the floor for new discussions and taking the risk of further delays. There were, although, slight modifications to the text to align it further with the CM adopted by WCPFC in 2007. Also, vessels with outboard engines and smaller than 20m without any mechanization system for the deployment or recovery of the gear (this is new compared to the recommendation from 2010) were not subject to this resolution. The text of the resolution also request the annual provision of available

information regarding interactions with seabirds and the establishment of national observer programmes aboard longline vessels.

The European Union and Japan submitted proposal IATTC-82-F-1 for the establishment of **scientific observers for longline vessels**. The measure was adopted as a resolution, which represents an important complement to the one adopted on seabird bycatch referred above. The text specifies the need of the further development of technical specifications, tasked to the Scientific Advisory Committee. This should happen by mid 2012 and cover aspects such as the way the observer coverage - initially established in at least 5% of the fishing effort - will be measured (e.g. sets, fishing days, number of vessels, hooks set). The measure will enter into force in January 2013.

In the margins of the meeting and as a continuation of discussions started in 2009, the final text for a **Memorandum of Understanding between the IATTC and ACAP** was ready for signature. The MoU was signed the following week by the time the Agreement's Executive Secretary was attending Kobe III in La Jolla.

Recommended Actions for ACAP

- The continuous attendance to technical and Commission meetings of the IATTC since 2008 allowed a better engagement with delegations, including those from Countries that are also Parties to ACAP. In some cases this also improved domestic connections within Countries. This participation raised the profile of the seabirds' agenda and the consultations with ACAP providing expert advice. In this regard the attendance to at least one of the IATTC annual meetings is recommended, although attendance to both the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Commission meeting should be considered.
- During the discussions in 2010 and 2011 for the development and adoption of the seabird conservation measure, the concept of having a consistent CMs across the Pacific was repeatedly addressed. This has to do with (1) the fact that part of the fleet fish both on the Eastern and Western Pacific waters, and (2) the existence of a large overlapping area between IATTC and WCPFC in the central Pacific. In this regard, the Agreement should consider a strategic approach for the refinement of the CM in parallel for both RFMOs.
- A more profound interaction with the SAC is recommended, particularly for the near future where important discussions will take place for the refinement of a seabird CM, and technical specifications for both the seabird measure and the scientific observer programmes. SAC will also be the forum for the discussion of alternative mitigation measures that could eventually be used by the artisanal fleet and other non mechanized vessels smaller than 20m not incorporated in the CM recently adopted.
- ACAP may play a relevant role in assisting the development of training programmes for observers and the creation of materials to improve the identification of seabirds and particularly those in Annex 1. In this regard, the experience already obtained in the training of observer programmes in Ecuador could be considered as a model to be exported to other IATTC Member Countries.
- So far there was an excellent cooperation with BirdLife International in the development of technical and advice documents, and trainings. IATTC has now a good picture of the areas of expertise that can be covered by both Organisations. In this regard, further cooperation and coordination of actions should be encouraged. It will be important for particular IATTC Members to engage other NGOs (e.g. Conservation International, WWF) that already play an important role in some areas and that could facilitate the work and implementation of measures in some Countries.